WHITTIER- In an effort to ensure the environmental viability of road improvement projects in California, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez presented $1.36 million to the city of Whittier which she secured in the $286 million federal transportation bill, TEA-LU which was signed into law on August 10th. The bill primarily funds transportation projects such as more freeway lanes and road improvement projects. However, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez was able to also secure funds for innovative environmental enhancements to local road improvement projects, one of which is in Whittier. Congresswoman Sánchez was joined by Whittier City Council members and officials from CalTrans, Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council and the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy to unveil the plans for the environmentally conscious road project.

"I am very pleased to have been able to secure funding for this environmentally sound road improvement projects," said Congresswoman Sánchez. "This project is the first of its kind in California. I hope that other localities catch onto this environmentally friendly method of road construction and retrofitting in urban areas to help enhance our local environment," added Sánchez.

In particular, the Whittier project will receive $1.36 million to improve Whittier Boulevard, which will include the construction of a mile-long "bio-swale" with natural landscaping along the roadway that will allow stormwater from the street gutter to flow into the bio-swale and be naturally absorbed and cleaned, rather than sending untreated storm water to our local beaches and oceans.

"It is really the small projects like this that, when added up, will really make an impact in saving our environment," concluded Sánchez.

Overall, Congresswoman Sánchez secured $12.8 million in federal funding through TEA-LU for transportation projects in the 39th Congressional District.

A bio-swale is a type of stormwater filtration system. It is a shallow depression created in the earth to accept and convey stormwater runoff. A bioswale uses natural means, including vegetation and soil, to treat stormwater by filtering out contaminants being conveyed in the water.